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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

Statement submitted by African Action on AIDS, Associated Country Women of the World, Centre for Women the Earth the Divine, European Union of Women, Hadassah: Women's Zionist Organization of America, International Alliance of Women, International Association of Democratic Lawyers, International Council of Jewish Women, International Council of Women, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of Social Workers, National Council of German Women's Organizations, Salvation Army, Servas International, Socialist International Women, Soka Gakkai International, Soroptimist International, Women's Federation for World Peace International, Women's International Zionist Organization, and World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2011/1.

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Statement*

1. Numerous United Nations documents and outcome documents of United Nations and other conferences highlight the importance of education, training and access to the full range of available academic and non-academic training, in particular science and technology, including lifelong learning for the development of women and society as a whole.

2. The need for legal provisions regarding the inclusion of women and girls in education and training for science and technology has not been sufficiently met, and their empowerment has not been achieved in spite of all attempts and progress made so far. Women are carrying a heavier burden due to the current financial crisis, because of the fact that reduction of Government debt is usually associated with a tangible reduction of social services and benefits. Economic growth, economic recovery and development are driven by scientific and technological innovations; countries and societies cannot afford to neglect the value of women's and girls' talents in these fields. Advocating decent work for women is a "win-win" strategy for the economy and societies.

3. In the light of this, we:

- Emphasize the importance of implementing measures to facilitate women's and girls' access to high-quality education and training at all levels
- Stress the need for support structures and policies to retain women and girls in education and training
- Call for safe transport to teaching institutions, the availability of separate sanitary facilities for both sexes and affordable, safe child and dependent care provisions
- Underline the importance of guaranteeing women's access to the labour market
- Call for legal measures ensuring the reconciliation of private and working life for women and men
- Stress the importance of counteracting prevailing gender stereotypes by revising curricula and textbooks and adopting non-discriminatory teaching methods and practices, and by carrying out media and educational campaigns in formal and non-formal settings
- Recommend equality impact analyses based on sex-disaggregated data to change the existing gender dynamics in education and employment
- Underline that decent work concerns not only decent working conditions, but also decent pay, and the whole range of so-called "social" occupations that are poorly paid and without the glamour of success stories, yet indispensable for societies
- Strongly recommend promoting and supporting partnerships between Governments, educational institutions, business and industry in order to end educational segregation, avoid the overrepresentation of women in precarious employment, and encourage women and girls to choose careers in science and engineering fields, traditionally viewed as male domains
- Stress the importance of women's participation in shaping innovative policies concerning science and technology.

* Issued without formal editing.